



NEWS RELEASE

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Statement by Ambassador Kristie A. Kenney

It has been an extraordinary honor and privilege to serve as the Ambassador of the United States to the Republic of the Philippines for more than three and a half years. Working with so many Filipinos, from all walks of life, has been one of the most memorable experiences of my life. I have come to deeply appreciate not just the warmth and friendship of Filipinos, but also their determination to make their country, region, and world a better place for their children and grandchildren. It has been a true pleasure to live in this beautiful country, and to lead the U.S. Embassy in efforts to partner with the government and people of the Philippines for the greater good of Americans and Filipinos alike.

Now, for personal and professional reasons, I need to plan my return to the United States. So it is with great pleasure that I learned that President Obama has named my successor. Ambassador-designate Harry Thomas is a personal friend of mine, an exceptional diplomat, and a wonderful person. His nomination still has to be confirmed by the United States Senate, so I will have the opportunity to continue to collaborate with Filipinos to improve lives and strengthen relations between our two countries over the coming months.

The relevant part of the White House announcement follows:

President Barack Obama on November 19 announced his intent to nominate Harry K. Thomas, Jr., to serve as Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines.

Speaking of Ambassador Thomas and other nominees, President Obama said: "These individuals will represent our nation well and work to fulfill the important goal of strengthening our relationships abroad. I look forward to working with them in the coming months and years."

Harry K. Thomas, Jr. is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and served most recently as Director General of the Foreign Service and Director of Human Resources. He previously served as a Special Assistant to the Secretary and Executive Secretary of the Department. Thomas, who joined the Foreign Service in 1984, served as

U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh from 2003 to 2005. He also served in the White House as the Director for South Asia at the National Security Council from 2001 to 2002. His other postings include: New Delhi, India; Harare, Zimbabwe; Kaduna, Nigeria; and Lima, Peru. He has served as Senior Watch Officer, Deputy Director, and Director of the State Department Operations Center; Special Assistant to the Under Secretary for Political Affairs; and Staff Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for African Affairs. Thomas holds a bachelors degree from the College of the Holy Cross.

Link to the White House website: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/president-obama-announces-more-key-administration-posts-111909>

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